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DIGEST OF PERIODICAL LITERATURE

INNOVATIONS IN ENGLISH TEACHING

"In the field of English in the secondary school there are today four, possibly five, movements that partake of the nature of innovations." With this sentence R. L. Lyman begins a useful survey of the subject of oral English in the *Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking* for October. The new movements referred to are: (1) teaching by means of "models," (2) emphasis on the process of thought-building, (3) co-operation with other departments, (4) increasing faith in the teaching of English as a tool, and (5) the substituting of oral work for part of the work in writing. The last topic is treated at length. The writer deprecates attention to the formal aspects of oral expression, especially at first, and would secure improvement chiefly through purposeful and well-planned expression in real situations. Voice-training is almost wholly an individual matter and should not be undertaken by those not specially prepared for it.

In the same journal appears a list of fifty one-act plays compiled by A. M. Drummond. Each play is briefly characterized and the list is prefaced with a short summary of the standards of choice which the writer thinks should be observed. The play for the school or college stage should beactable; it should have somewhat of literary value; the author should be a man of recognized ability; no difficult or unpleasant situations should be included; the presentation should be reasonably easy; and the play should be readily accessible in print and obtainable for production at a reasonable rate.

E. A. Cross, of the State Teachers College of Colorado, is contributing a series of articles on the teaching of grammar to *The Public Schools*. Under the title "Schoolmissing the English Language" he writes in the November number on the folly of wasting time on such imaginary faults as the use of "got" while "ain't," "he don't," "didn't see no," and other "ravening lions of illiterate speech stalk abroad unassailed." He offers a list of real errors which we need to attack with courage and untiring persistence, some of which are the habit of connecting all ideas with "and" or "but," illiterate punctuation, dangling participial phrases, incorrect past tense forms and past participles of the "forty troublesome verbs," and the inaccurate use of "shall" and "will."

In the *Teachers College Record* for September appears an excellent article on "The Teaching of Dramatic Arts," by Caroline Crawford. She first establishes as her foundation principle the distinction between fact and value. The drama is an art and hence not the representation of facts but of their spiritual and emotional significance. Its method is that of all art, presentation of the "ideally signified" through the image of external fact. The chief elements of expression are characterization, plot, and setting. Through instinctive tendencies the child in his play begins to represent, and using first the method of characterization passes by and by to more complex modes involving plot and setting. The danger is that the teacher, having in mind the professional drama, will think chiefly of the audience and seek to develop prematurely a consciousness of technique, failing to understand the child's point of view.

Much has been written about Longfellow, yet Gamaliel Bradford is able to give a personal touch to his article in the November *Bookman* which makes the familiar story fresh again. In the same number appears the second instalment of William Lyon Phelps's popular presentation of "The Advance of the English Novel," and a very interesting account of "Bayard Taylor's Romance," by Ralph Armstrong.

A NEEDED EDUCATIONAL OFFICER

English is so important and so difficult a study that it should not be left to the devices of the general supervisor but should command the services of an expert, especially in the large cities. So thinks C. R. Rounds, who contributes a forceful article on the subject to the July number of the *American School*. He draws his illustrations from Milwaukee, but could find them quite as easily elsewhere.

BOOK NOTICES

[Mention under this head does not preclude review elsewhere.]

How to Study and What to Study. By RICHARD L. SANDWICK. New York: D. C. Heath & Co., 1915. Pp. 170.

A much-needed book. It is intended for the pupil himself and might be used as material to practice on.

Browning, How to Know Him. By WILLIAM LYON PHELPS. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1915. Pp. 381. \$1.25.

Like Perry's volume on Carlyle in the same series, a readable and suggestive treatment—a personal introduction.